

FOCUS

On Church/ministry Leadership

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Introduction

I have been asked to write a study guide on the topic of church leadership, especially by our friends in countries such as India, Pakistan, and Africa. They have shared the need for a simple, yet very practical study guide to help train their leadership (pastors, assistant pastors, elders, and deacons) on how to lead the ministry/church God has given them.

This study guide is an attempt to help meet that need.

As we begin let's look at some great quotes about leadership including:

"The Buck Stops Here" ... Harry Truman

Everything rises and falls on leadership... John Maxwell

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more, and become more, you are a leader... John Quincy Adams

People ask the difference between a leader and a boss. The leader leads, and the boss drives... Theodore Roosevelt

As you begin your journey of studying to be a very successful Christian Leader ... every church and ministry leader should read both the Books of Ezra and Nehemiah. Ezra was tasked with the vision of rebuilding the Temple in Jerusalem after years of decay, and Nehemiah was tasked with rebuilding the wall of the city of Jerusalem; both men had great leadership skills.

As you read these two books, list three leadership skills that you noticed for each man.

If you had the choice to compare yourself to some of the Great Leaders within the Bible, who would you believe you were most like? Would think you're more like:

- Abraham
- Moses
- King David
- King Solomon
- Apostle Paul
- Apostle James
- Other?

Using the acrostic “F-O-C-U-S”

We will look at some of the most defining factors, needs, and requirements for being a successful church leader.

F – Faithful to the Direction/Mission God has given your church/ministry.

- This is established through very serious prayer and discussion by
 - o Define your personal calling of ministry
 - o Define your ministries/church purpose
 - o Define your ministries/church vision

Plans fail without counsel, but with many advisers, they succeed. —Proverbs 15:22

The plans of the heart belong to man, but the answer of the tongue is from the Lord. All the ways of a man are pure in his own eyes, but the Lord weighs the spirit. Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established. —Proverbs 16:1-3

This is called the Mission Statement:

“A very clear and simple definition of the purpose for your ministry: A written declaration of an organization's core purpose and focus that normally remains unchanged over time. Properly crafted mission statements (1) serve as filters to separate what is important from what is not, (2) clearly state which markets will be served and how, and (3) communicate a sense of intended direction to the entire organization.

A mission is different from a vision in that the former is the cause and the latter is the effect; a mission is something to be accomplished whereas a

vision is something to be pursued for that accomplishment. It may also be called a company mission, corporate mission, or corporate purpose.”¹

Another great statement about mission statements is: “A church mission statement defines the leadership's vision of congregational purpose and tells you if their vision is in line with God's purposes for your life.”²

Challenge Question: As you pray and seek God’s direction and wisdom for your life, what do you believe is your calling? How do you see yourself fulfilling your calling in ministry?

O- Observe ethical boundaries in all you do.

The definition of ethics is defined as an: adjective 1. Pertaining to or dealing with morals or the principles of morality; pertaining to right and wrong in conduct. 2. being in accordance with the rules or standards for right conduct or practice, especially the standards of a profession:³

I read a quote once and don’t remember the author. I believe he summarizes leadership and ethics in his statement: *“Creditability is the most important ingredient in a leader”*

Proverbs 22:29 Do you see a man skilled in his work? He will stand before kings; He will not stand before obscure men.

Three essential areas we need to have ethical boundaries are,

- Finances

¹Copied from The Business Dictionary @

<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/mission-statement.html#ixzz3lxzwqnhX>

²Copied from the site: http://www.missionstatements.com/church_mission_statements.html

³ <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/ethical?s=t>

- o Our personal finances should be above reproach.
- o The financial structure of our church/ministry should be set up to keep everybody informed, and not open up ourselves or church/ministry to questions of unethical spending.
- Relationships
 - o We should be very cautious of who we associate with both personal and professional (not associating with people of questionable reputation)
- Counseling
 - o We need to set clear boundaries in our counseling practices.
 - Be very cautious when you counsel an individual of the opposite sex.
 - Be very careful not to counsel people to stop taking the medication without their doctor's consent.

Challenge Question: As a key part of observing your personal ethical boundaries is accountability. What are you personally doing to be accountable? And to whom are you accountable?

C - Clearly understand your personal role within the church/ministry.

- Pastor/Elders/Bishop
- Deacon
- Assistant/Associate Minister
- Active member in charge of a specific ministry.
- Awareness that there will be criticism of you personally and your ministry.

A great illustration found in Acts 6, when the Apostle James and the other apostles addressed the church, *"It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve the tables"* They set a clear expectation of what they should be doing in the church.

The New International Version quotes Ephesians 4:11 this way: *"So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,"*

As church leaders and ministers, it is imperative that we learn what God has called us to and help build the body of Christ through the gifts and skills that HE (Christ) has given each of us.

We need to understand the differences between "Calling" and "our Role within the Church" they may not be the same, and this is often a place of major contention within the church or ministry today.

A leader develops the people to do the work; you can't do the ministry alone.

Challenge Question: As pastors/church leaders it is extremely important that we have individuals that we can depend on to pray with us, and for us. List 5 individuals that you have a part of your personal prayer team that you can contact to pray for both professional needs and personal needs.

U- Unify a team with the vision that God has laid in place for your church/ministry.

- So that church/ministries are moving in the same direction
- Develop and strengthen your **CORE LEADERSHIP** team
 - o *"Definition: Core Leadership Team* ...No one leader, and not even any two, has the breadth of competence and depth of capacity to do anything of much significance alone. Successful organizations often have a Core Leadership Team of three to seven top executives who are

aligned to accomplish specific goals as a cohesive unit. The executives in a successful organization's Core Leadership Team are very good at different important things; they enjoy working together; they all want to accomplish the same thing and give credit for any success to everyone else."⁴

- Continually share the vision with the larger groups of leaders. (Example would be a quarterly, bi-annual, or even yearly meeting with all teachers, workers, and etc. to share the vision and success of the church/ministry.)
- Prayerfully working together
- Successfully communicating within your ministry/church

Challenge Question: What plans have you put in place within your church/ministry as to be able to effectively share your vision and the direction the ministry is heading?

S- Share your vision and outcomes effectively so that others can follow.

- Keeping people focused on your vision!
- Keeping people informed of what is the ministry is doing and what you are doing personally in ministry.
 - o Two styles of leadership:
 1. Having a leadership team and only sharing information with them that you are expecting them to pass on.
 2. Sharing with the larger crowd on a weekly, monthly, or yearly basis so that everybody is hearing the vision and objective from the lead visionary.

Challenge Question: The ability to share your vision effectively is important. However, it is also very important that we let me know. How do you effectively communicate with your church/ministry when you have

⁴IntelliVen website copyrighted 201, <http://www.intelliven.com/tag/dictionary-of-terms/>

reached a goal or milestone, as well as, a personal accomplishment, so the folks in your church/ministry can rejoice with you.